



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Midland

504 Dominion Avenue
Midland, ON
L4R 1P8
Tel.: 705-527-7654
Fax: 705-527-7668

Orillia

575 West Street South
Unit 12 Orillia, ON
L3V 7N6
Tel.: 705-327-0513
Fax: 705-327-8310



Bruce Stanton

Member of Parliament
for Simcoe North/
Député de
Simcoe Nord

Deputy Speaker and
Chair of Committees
of the Whole/Vice-
président et président
des comités pléniers

Ottawa

Room 528-N
Centre Block
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6
Tel.: 613-992-6582
Fax: 613-996-3128

bruce.stanton@parl.gc.ca
http://www.brucestantonmp.ca

February 5, 2018

Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Lester B. Pearson Building, Tower A
125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, K1A 0G2

Dear Minister:

I am writing to you in support of constituents in my riding of Simcoe North, John and Janet Spring, whose daughter Karen has been defending against human rights abuses and fighting for the oppressed and persecuted in Honduras for more than a decade.

As a member of Honduras Solidarity Network, Karen described her work in testimony before two House of Commons Committees in 2013, and 2014. She testified before the Sub-Committee on International Human Rights on April 23, 2013, and the Committee on International Trade, April 14, 2014.

I learned last week that Karen's husband, Edwin Robelo Espinal, had been taken into custody for alleged crimes involving rioting and for opposing the government's questionable result from the general election on November 26, 2017. Ms. Spring and Mr. Espinal have been avid defenders of human rights and democracy in Honduras through their activism within US and International human rights organizations. A profile of their mission can be found at <https://simcoecountyhondurasrightsmonitor.wordpress.com/>.

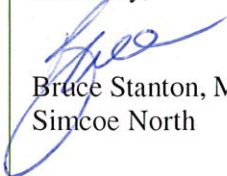
You are certainly aware of the disintegrating conditions in Honduras, a country with much promise and one with which we have a free trade agreement, but recent events have seen it descending into greater internecine violence, the suspension of constitutional protections for citizens and the now questionable detainment of political dissidents.

I am told that Ms. Karen Spring has contacted our Embassy in San José, with a view to understanding what, if any, consular service she may access for her own protection. Mr. Espinal is a Honduran national.

I realize the presumption of innocence in some Central American countries does not prevent detainment before an investigation and trial. Nevertheless, on behalf of my constituents, and considering the quickly deteriorating situation in Honduras, I am appealing to you to explore diplomatic channels that might seek the release of Mr. Espinal.

Canada is a staunch defender of human rights around the globe, a reputation I and so many Canadians wear with tremendous pride. I hope that our consular service personnel in Honduras can assist Ms. Spring with her husband's situation, and work to find a resolution quickly.

Sincerely,


Bruce Stanton, MP
Simcoe North

